

# **Information Services from The Bureau of Labor Statistics**

## **Philadelphia Regional Office**

- ☐ Types of data available
- ☐ Uses of data
- ☐ Services of the Regional Office
- ☐ Publications available at no charge
- ☐ How to contact the Office of Economic Analysis and Information

### ***Major Programs***

#### **Prices and Living Conditions**

The Bureau has a wide variety of information on prices and price trends in retail, domestic producer, and import-export markets. The programs include Consumer Price Indexes (CPI), Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CEX), Producer Price Indexes (PPI), and Export and Import Price Indexes for U.S. foreign trade.

In addition to the monthly U.S. City Average CPI, indexes are also available for metropolitan areas including Philadelphia-Wilmington-Atlantic City, Washington-Baltimore, and Pittsburgh. Consumer expenditure data are available for the same areas on a biennial basis.

The CPI is widely used as an indicator of inflationary trends in the economy and measures the purchasing power of the consumer dollar. It is also used as the basis for adjustment of payments under many government programs and in rental and other long-term agreements.

The PPI measures price change for particular commodities and is widely used as an escalator in long-term contracts. National data are available for the net output of virtually all industries in the mining and manufacturing sectors.

#### **Employment and Unemployment Statistics**

The Bureau analyzes and publishes monthly data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) on the labor force, employment, and unemployment for the U.S. as a whole and for the 11 largest states.

CPS information, providing demographic detail, is available on an annual basis for each state and many metropolitan areas including Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; Baltimore; Washington, DC; and Norfolk-Virginia Beach.

These data are the primary source of information on employment status and characteristics of the labor force, emerging trends, and changes. They can also be used as a measure of potential labor supply.

Detailed industry data on employment, wages, hours, and earnings of workers in nonagricultural business establishments are also published and are available monthly, in varying detail, for the U.S., all states, and many metropolitan areas. Monthly estimates of state and local area employment and unemployment, produced through a joint Federal-State program, are also available.

Industry data can be used for plant location planning, wage negotiations, and adjustment of labor costs in escalation of long-term contracts.

#### **Compensation and Working Conditions**

The Bureau conducts over 100 National Compensation Surveys annually; many of the largest metropolitan areas in the region are included in this program.

Local data may be used for wage and salary administration; union contract negotiations; plant location planning; analysis of wage differentials among occupations, industries, and areas; and labor cost estimates.

Nonwage compensation is covered in a comprehensive survey of the incidence and

## **Major Programs**

### **Compensation and Working Conditions--Continued**

characteristics of employee benefit plans. The Bureau also examines trends in employee compensation through the Employment Cost Index (ECI) which covers the total nonfarm private economy and State and local governments.

ECI and benefit information are useful in collective bargaining; escalation in long-term contracts; general economic analysis, including trends in labor costs; and benefit administration and program development in public and private sectors.

The Bureau also supplies occupational safety and health data providing injury and illness information by industry.

### **Employment Projections**

The Bureau develops long-term economic projections based upon certain specific assumptions. These projections provide a comprehensive and integrated framework for analyzing the implications of likely economic growth trends for the national economy and for employment in each industry and occupation. The projections are also used to develop the biennial *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.

### **Speakers service**

The Philadelphia Office will provide speakers upon request and will conduct workshops and seminars on BLS programs throughout its region which includes Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, DC. Sessions can be tailored to meet the needs of government officials, professional groups, colleges and universities, librarians, and others. There is no charge for this service.

### **Information services**

Bureau staff are available to answer technical questions, retrieve data, and generally assist the public with data products. The staff can be reached by telephone, FAX, mail, or personal visit.

### **Automated data retrieval**

The Regional Office provides 24-hour access to a wide variety of Bureau data through the FAX-ON-DEMAND service; the CPI Hotlines maintained in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Baltimore; and through the Internet.

The Philadelphia Regional Office Internet address is <http://www.bls.gov/ro3/home.htm>

Contact the Regional Office for help in accessing these programs.

### **Free publications**

Both Bureau-wide and Regional Office press releases are available at no charge from the Philadelphia Office. In addition, complementary copies of many publications are available while supplies last.

### **How to contact the Regional Office**

The Philadelphia Regional Office is located in Suite 610E, The Curtis Center, 170 S. Independence Mall West, Philadelphia, PA. A library of Bureau publications is open to the public from 8:15 a.m. until 4:45 p.m.

The Economic Analysis and Information Unit (EA&I) staff can be reached by telephone from 8:30 a.m. until noon and from 1:00 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. daily. Mail and FAX requests are accepted. Telephone recordings on the Consumer Price Index and FAX-ON-DEMAND service covering most Bureau programs are available 24 hours a day and selected data can be faxed immediately.

Mailing lists for the Philadelphia Regional CPI monthly announcement are maintained by the EA&I staff. Additions, deletions, and address changes can be made by mail or by faxing the information. Requests for changes should include a copy of the address label. Please allow 1 month for implementation.

#### **Mailing address:**

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Suite 610E—The Curtis Center  
170 S. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3305

**Economic Analysis and  
Information Unit staff telephone:**  
(215) 597-3282

**Fax inquiries:**  
(215) 861-5720

**FAX-ON-DEMAND service:**  
(215) 597-4153

**CPI & PPI Hotline  
with Fax-back:**  
Philadelphia- (215) 656-3948  
Pittsburgh- (412) 644-2900  
Baltimore  
and Washington- (410) 962-4898

**Internet Address:**  
<http://www.bls.gov/ro3/home.htm>